

VERIFICATION PANEL MEETING

Friday, July 30, 1971

Time and Place: 3:05 - 3:15 p.m., White House Situation Room

Subject: Soviet Proposal for Five-Power Nuclear Conference

Participants:

Chairman - Henry A. Kissinger	Justice - Attorney General John Mitchell
State - John N. Irwin, II	ACDA - Philip J. Farley
Ronald Spiers	David Linebaugh
Martin J. Hillenbrand	
Robert A. Martin	OST - Dr. Edward David
Defense - Robert J. Pranger	NSC Staff - R/Adm. Robert O. Welander
Col. John Nolan	Helmut Sonnenfeldt
	William Hyland
JCS - Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt	John Holdridge
Col. James McCarthy	Jeanne W. Davis
CIA - Richard Helms	

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

-- it was premature to try to discuss an agenda for any five-power nuclear conference;

-- assuming our allies react favorably to our soundings, we would make our initial oral reply that we are considering the Soviet proposal .

Mr. Kissinger: We have two problems today: (1) how to respond to the Soviet proposal for a five-power nuclear conference, and (2) what the agenda should be for such a conference. As I understand the present positions, we have said we are still studying the proposal; the French are willing to go; the UK is mildly interested; and the Chinese have said no.

Mr. Irwin: The French have said they would not attend unless the Chinese also come.

Adm. Zumwalt: And the Chinese have told the French they wouldn't go.

Mr. Kissinger: They have given the impression that they wouldn't go, but they haven't rejected it officially, have they?

Mr. Helms: Chou En-Lai has been completely negative.

Mr. Hillenbrand: Chou also told the French Ambassador in Peking that they would not attend.

Mr. Kissinger: Would we consider going to a four-power meeting? Of course, there wouldn't be a four-power meeting, since if China doesn't go, France won't go. Would the UK go if China or China and France don't go?

Adm. Zumwalt: We already have a two-power conference going.

Mr. Kissinger: Realistically, how can we reply to something we know won't come off in such a way as not to create complications for China? We could reject the proposal outright. We could accept on the condition that all the other powers accept, as France did. Or we could accept on the two conditions that all the other countries accept and that the agenda is satisfactory. What are the views as to what we should do?

Mr. Irwin: We've actually been operating along the lines of Option 6 -- temporizing on giving a reply.

Mr. Spiers: We think it best to leave it without oral reply until something happens.

Mr. Irwin: Option 2 might appear as though we were needling China to attend.

Mr. Kissinger: Making our attendance contingent on a satisfactory agenda doesn't cure that problem.

Mr. Mitchell: Are the Russians putting any pressure on us for a more definitive answer?

Mr. Kissinger: Not yet, but I don't doubt that Dobrynin will start needling us in a low-key way.

Mr. Irwin: (to Mr. Spiers) To whom did our interim message go?

Mr. Spiers: It was an oral statement to be made in NATO and will then go to Japan, Australia and New Zealand. We don't anticipate any objections from them on our position.

Mr. Kissinger: Then we can just stand on that. Dick (Helms), what do you think?

Mr. Helms: I think it would be wise.

Mr. Irwin: Once we hear back from our allies, we can make the statement to the Russians.

Mr. Mitchell: What is the purpose behind the Russian proposal?

Mr. Kissinger: To isolate the Chinese.

Mr. Helms: Yes, and the new Russian statement today is obviously pointed to the Chinese.

Mr. Mitchell: Which is even further justification for our standing pat.

Mr. Kissinger: Does our oral message say we are studying the proposal?

Mr. Farley: It identifies some of the things that would have to be dealt with if the conference should come alive.

Mr. Kissinger: It also said we shouldn't do anything to prejudice SALT and assumes all five countries are willing to accept.

Mr. Farley: This seemed as far as it made sense to go at this point.

Mr. Kissinger: Then it is really premature to try to discuss what we would discuss at any such conference.

Mr. Farley: I agree.

Mr. Kissinger: I find the list of possible agenda items most unpromising.

Dr. David: There is one far-out thing that might be discussed, and that is the question of uranium enrichment techniques involving the use of plutonium

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of which the U. S. is the main supplier. The Soviets might have something in mind on that.

Mr. Farley: I think the International Atomic Energy Agency in Geneva has a pretty good understanding with the Soviets on that.

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